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<Note> Dermatophytosis of M group Chimpanzees, Mahale Mountains, Tanzania

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40 years¹. We noticed a skin disease developing among some members of M group in 2001 and 2002.

Table 1. List of chimpanzees that suffered from dermatophytosis

Individual	Age & Sex	First day dermatophytosis observed	Last day dermatophytosis observed	Minimum duration (Days) of suffering
Caesar	infant male	May 10, 2001	May 29, 2001	20
Ruby	adult female	May 21, 2001	Jun. 3, 2001	14
Rubicon	infant female	Jun. 3, 2001	Jul. 2, 2001	29
Michio	juvenile male	Aug.30, 2001	Oct. 3, 2001	35
Alofu	adult male	Sep. 9, 2001	Oct. 3, 2001	25
Darwin	adolescent male	Sep.16, 2001	Oct. 9, 2001	24
Jiddah	juvenile female	Sep.16, 2001	Oct. 2, 2001	17
Miya	adult female	Sep.21, 2001	Sep.30, 2001	10
Cadmus	adolescent male	Sep.25, 2001	Oct. 3, 2001	9
Aqua	infant female	Sep.29, 2001	Sep.30, 2001	2
Ivana	juvenile female	Nov. 8, 2001	Nov.21, 2001	14
Cynthia	adult female	May 18, 2002	May 18, 2002	1
Xmas	juvenile male	Oct. 4, 2002	Oct. 4, 2002	1

RK observed M group chimpanzees for the whole years of 2001 and 2002, SF from June to October 2001, TM from September 2000 to June 2001, TN from September to October 2001 and from September to November 2002, and MS from September 2001 to October 2002. We recorded any observable injuries, disease symptoms such as coughing, and abnormalities of the skin, faces and eyes.

On May 10, 2001, we first noticed that an infant male, Caesar, had a whitish nose and left cheek; it looked as if white chalk had been applied to the part. On July 2, a female infant, Rubicon, had a whitish face. On September 9, an adult male, Alofu, had a whitish upper lip. In September, as many as 7 individuals at once showed this skin disease.

Table 1 shows the first and last observed dates of the disease in 13 individuals. Its occurrence biased to seasons with high humidity might suggest a fungal infection, so that the disease may be some form of dermatophytosis. Victims were from all age-sex classes and no conspicuous age or sex differences were found (1 of 8 adult males, 3 of 20 adult females, 2 of 5 adolescent males, 0 of 2 adolescent females, 2 of 2 juvenile males, 2 of 3 juvenile females, 1 of

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The chimpanzees of the Kasoje area in the Mahale Mountains National Park have been studied for more than

3 infant males, 2 of 10 infant females). These 12 chimpanzees had dermatophytosis on their faces, in particular, upper lip, nose, cheek, and supraorbital ridge (Fig.1). The exception was Michio, who had a white mark on the back of his hand, as well as a white face. Although we could not always check all individuals during the study periods, it was likely that the skin disease lasted several weeks (minimum, median = 14 days) for each victim and the longest span was 35 days. The infectious nature of the disease was inferred from the victims being concentrated to the short period of September to October, 2001 and from the close relationships among at least some victims: for example, Miya is the mother of Michio, and Ruby is the mother of Rubicon. Roy² described a fungal disease from the chimpanzees of Gombe, but not this type of skin disease. Bill Wallauer's³ recent blog shows a photograph of a Gombe chimpanzee, Faustino, who appeared to show the same skin disease as described here.

Neither victims nor the others showed any attention to the infected parts of the body; the victims did not scratch the whitish parts of their faces. Later, all individuals recovered their normal dark faces without experiencing any apparent health problems (Cf. Hubbard⁴).

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Fig. 1. Dermatophytosis on the faces of the Mahale M-group chimpanzees. See the text for details.